ന്റെ നടപടിക്രമങ്ങൾ എന്തെല്ലാമായിരുന്നെന്നും അറിയുവാൻ ആ ഭരണ റിപ്പോർട്ടാണ് മാനദണ്ഡമെന്ന് ഞാൻ വിശ്വസിക്കുന്നു. വാസ്തവത്തിൽ കൊച്ചിയിലെ ഡിപ്പാർട്ട്മെണ്ടുകളുടെ ഭരണറിപ്പോർട്ടുകൾ വല്ല പുരാണവസ്തു ഗവേഷണത്തിന്റെ റിപ്പോർട്ട്സമ്പ്രദായത്തിൽ സൂക്ഷിച്ചുവെക്കുവാനുള്ളതാണെന്ന് വിശ്വസിക്കുന്നതബദ്ധമല്ല. ഭരണറിപ്പോർട്ടുകൊണ്ട് ശരിയായി മനസ്സിലാക്കേണ്ടതു് ഓരോ ഡിപ്പാർട്ട്മെണ്ടിനും ഒരു കൊല്ലത്തിൽ നിയമസഭ അനുവദിച്ച പണം ആ ഡിപ്പാർട്ട്മെണ്ടു് എങ്ങിനെ ചിലവഴിച്ചുവെന്നും, അതുകൊണ്ടു് എന്തെല്ലാം ഗുണങ്ങളാണു് പൊതുജനങ്ങൾക്കു് ഉണ്ടായിട്ടുള്ളതെന്നുമാകുന്നു. എല്ലാ ഡിപ്പാർട്ട്മെണ്ടുകളുടേയും ഭരണറിപ്പോർട്ടു് അതിനു അനുയോജ്യമാണോയെന്നു് ഞാൻ സംശയിക്കുന്നു. അങ്ങിനെയുള്ള ഒരു റിപ്പോർട്ടു്, പിന്നെ ഒരുകൊല്ലത്തെ പണം അനുവദിച്ചുകൊടുത്തു്, രണ്ടാമതു് ഒരു കൊല്ലത്തെ പണംകൂടി അനുവദിച്ചു കൊടുത്തതിനുശേഷമെ പുറത്തു വരുന്നുള്ളുവെങ്കിൽ അതു് പരിതാപകരമാണു്. ൧൯൧൭-ൽ നടക്കുന്ന ബഡ്ജറ്റ സമ്മേളനത്തിൽ ൧൯൧൮-ലേക്കുള്ള പണം അനുവദിച്ചു. ൧൯൧൮-ൽ വരുന്ന ബഡ്ജറ്റ സമ്മേളനം കഴിഞ്ഞു്, ൧൯൧൯-ലെ ബഡ്ജറ്റ സമ്മേളനം കഴിയുമ്പോഴും ൧൯൧൮-ലെ ഭരണറിപ്പോർട്ടു് പുറത്തു വരുന്നില്ലെങ്കിൽ നിർജ്ജീവമായ എന്തോ മനസാണു്, ഭരണറിപ്പോർട്ടിനെ പുറത്തുകൊണ്ടുവരുവാനുള്ള യന്ത്രത്തെ നയിക്കുന്നതു് എന്നു പറയേണ്ടിയിരിക്കുന്നു. ഇതു് ഒരു ഗവൺമെണ്ടിനും അഭിമാനകരമല്ല. ഇങ്ങിനെ ഒരു റിപ്പോർട്ടു് കയ്യിൽ ഇല്ലെങ്കിൽ ആകാശമൊന്നും ഇടിഞ്ഞുപൊളിഞ്ഞു വീഴുവാൻ പോകുന്നില്ലെന്നു് വിശ്വസിക്കുന്ന ആളുകളും ഈക്കൂട്ടത്തിലില്ലായ്കയില്ല. എങ്കിലും പുതിയ ഒരാൾക്കു് അതിലുള്ളതെന്താണെന്നറിയാനാഗ്രഹമുണ്ടാകുന്നതനാശാസ്യമല്ല. അതിനുള്ള സൌകര്യം തരേണ്ടതു ഗവൺമെണ്ടാണു്. കഴിഞ്ഞ ബഡ്ജറ്റസമ്മേളനത്തിനു ഞാനിവിടെ വന്നപ്പോഴും, അതുകഴിഞ്ഞു വീട്ടിൽ പോയപ്പോഴുമാണു് ചിലവകുപ്പുകളുടെ അഡ്മിനിസ്ട്രേഷൻ റിപ്പോർട്ട് കിട്ടിയതു്. ഇതാണു് നമ്മുടെ ഭരണറിപ്പോർട്ട് പ്രസിദ്ധപ്പെടുത്തുന്ന സമ്പ്രദായം. ഈ സമ്പ്രദായം മാറി ഭരണറിപ്പോർട്ടുകൾ ബഡ്ജറ്റസമ്മേളനത്തിനു് ഒരു മാസം മുമ്പെങ്കിലും അനുദ്യോഗസ്ഥസാമാജികന്മാക്കു് കിട്ടത്തക്കവിധത്തിൽ പ്രസിദ്ധംചെയ്താൽ കൊള്ളാമെന്നുള്ളതാണു് എന്റെ ഈ പ്രമേയംകൊണ്ടു ഞാൻ ഉദ്ദേശിക്കുന്നതു്.

Mr. K. M. Ibrahim *(Cranganur):* I second it.

Rama Varmha Tampuran *(Secretary to Government):* There is no objection for the Government to accept this resolution. As a matter of fact it is being done. Only last year there was some delay. This year we will be publishing it by the end of January and every year we used to publish it by the end of Decemher. There will be no difficulty with regard to this.

മിസ്റ്റർ പി. കെ. കൃഷ്ണൻ: സർ, അടുത്തകാലത്തൊന്നും പ്രധാനപ്പെട്ട ഡിപ്പാർട്ട്മെണ്ടുകളുടെ ഭരണറിപ്പോർട്ട് പ്രസിദ്ധംചെയ്യുകാണുന്നില്ല. അതിന്റെ കാരണം എന്തുതന്നെയായിരുന്നാലും, ഇനിയെങ്കിലും അതു പ്രസിദ്ധപ്പെടുത്തണമെന്നു് ഞാൻ വിനീതമായി അപേക്ഷിച്ചുകൊള്ളുന്നു. ഈ പ്രമേയത്തിൽ പറഞ്ഞിട്ടുള്ളതിനോടു ഞാൻ യോജിക്കുന്നു.

Mr. C. K. Nayar *(Nemmara):* I beg to withdraw the Resolution.

Resolution, by leave, withdrawn

RESOLUTION No. 8

Recommending the suspension of the working of the Price Control Department for 3 months

***Mr. T. A. Ramachandra Ayyar** *(Nellayi):* Sir, this is a very simple resolution, perhaps the simplest one in the agenda. It contains only a line and a half. The resolution is "This Council recommends to the Government to suspend the working of the Price Control Department for three months". The Price Control Department was ostensibly intended to restrict and regulate the prices and make available to the people all essential commodities in sufficient quantities. Instead of achieving its real objective, the inauguration of the department has brought the people to a very sorry predicament. We are first to control the commodity and next the price when there is scarcity. But our Government blundered and did otherwise. When the control price was published in the Gazette the merchants at once secreted their goods and people could not get supplies. A day before the announcement there were bags and bags

* Speech not corrected by the hon'ble member.

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of sugar in the Trichur Bazaar but the next morning to our surprise all the sugar melted into the air.

What is done for rice is very peculiar. Licenses issued for the import of rice enable the licensees to enrich themselves and people feel the scarcity and when they do not get rice they have no other go but to pay too high prices secretly in order to avoid starvation. Our Government is very vigilant in restricting and penalising the imports of even small quantities of rice and other stuffs rather than check the exports thereof. Government at one time wanted to entrust the Panchayats with the sale of these articles. Not only this was not done but the usual sale also was stopped and the villagers had to manage without kerosene and sugar at all for many days. Now the people are made to believe that fair price shops are to be opened. All were anxiously expecting that shops would be opened here and there very soon. But like the proverbal saying in Malayalam "കുംഭീക്ക് മുലവരുന്നുപോലെ" only one or two shops unfortunately have come into existence so far. I had the privilege of visiting the first shop opened in Eravu with the Hon'ble Minister. Rice is sold in this shop only in the few hours of the morning and kerosene is sold in the after-noon and this only to those who personally go there. None of the working class people can afford to lose their daily work for personally presenting themselves to the wonderful shop for a measure of rice and an ounce of kerosene. The salaries paid for the men in the shop are enough and more to make them distribute both rice and kerosene throughout the day at all hours.

Sugar supplies seem to be abundant in the whole of India except Cochin State. Large number of bags of sugar is given to some select merchants without an effective control over the prices. They sell a few pounds to a few people at the control prices and sell the rest at any price they like. This system enriches the few people and cause additional hardship to the public. This rationing system was introduced only in towns. What about the villages. What are the villagers to do. Even a scavenger gets sugar and kerosene in the town. But a decent tax payer in a village does not get these amenities. But our price controller seems to think that high class people who alone use sugar live only in towns. But I tell him there are many high class people in the villages also.

Kerosene oil under the departmental arrangement has become a total scarcity. We are told that 50 per cent of the prewar quantity of kerosene is being imported now. If it is a fact where is the difficulty of supplying the public with at least one-fourth of what was being given then, if not more.

Not only the department has not done any good but it has done a great harm. With what great efforts our people were induced to implement the tapioca cultivation can be known only to those who did the work. But the price control department has falsified the hopes given by the food production officers and non-officials by fixing a price which will not even cover the labour charges involved in the cultivation. This is a death blow dealt against the future cultivation of the commodity.

Mr. V. K. Bhaskara Menon *(Cranganur)*: May I know what is the price fixed for tapioca?

Mr. T. A. Ramachandra Ayyar *(Nellayi)*: 4 pies per pound.

I have dealt with only some items. In almost every line of the department's activities nobody can find any substantial good having come out of them. It has positively harmed in many csses.

Nobody will question the necessity for such a department in war time. Most essential commodities of civilian consumption have to be subjected to restriction and it is a wise policy to ensure available stocks against emergencies. Such things are being effectively and beautifully done in adjacent territories. But our State department of price control in my opinion, has miserably failed in the discharge of its onerous duties and unless the whole system is reorganised in such a way as to be of real service to the people at large, I am for scrapping it altogether or at least to suspend the activities for some time. In this connection I wish to make one point clear and that is that no personal reflections are intended by this resolution. You and I know very well that the Commissioner for Civil Supplies is working very hard both day and night with the best of intentions. While unprecedented famine is prevailing throughout our State we see no famine with regard to the creation of new appointments with high salaries unlike other States. Even in spite of the creation of these national liabilities as I may put it, the working is deplorably inefficient. From this we have to infer that there is something radically wrong somewhere in the present system. I therefore think that less the control, the better for the masses.

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Mr. C. N. Ittiravi Nambudiripad *(Anthikad)*: I second it.

Mr. V. K. Bhaskara Menon *(Cranganur)*: Sir, I rise to oppose this resolution with all the emphasis at my command. I regard this resolution as one of those instances in which Hon'ble Members come prepared with a written speech which they wanted to deliver and without caring to know whether any changes have been made or whether any improvements havs been effected.

Mr. T. A. Ramachandra Ayyar *(Nellayi)*: The change is not sufficient.

Mr. V. K. Bhaskara Menon *(Cranganur)*: I hope the Hon'ble Member will please allow me to speak. I wanted to ascertain from the Hon'ble Member, when he was speaking about tapicca, whether he wrote the speech himself. While he was referring to the tapioca cultivation in his speech I ascertained from him that the price of tapioca was 4 pies per pound. I know that the price of tapioca has been increased. The price is now fixed at 10 pies, instead of 4 pies.

Mr. T. A. Ramachandra Ayyar *(Nellayi)*: It is only 4 pies now. Ten pies is for 2½ pounds. You are speaking on incorrect information. *(Laughter)*.

***Mr. V. K. Bhaskara Menon** *(Cranganur)*: I am subject to correction. I was under the impression that it is 10 pies. Even if it is only 4 pies per pound that does not affect the position. I am all the more stronger even with all this. I positively dispute the statement that the price control department is working in a haphazard manner. Now I made a misstatement and that has created a volley of laughter. I happened to belong to a Party in which both the leader and the follower are one. So the volume of laughter will be much more when it is at my expense. The Hon'ble Member from Nellayi said that the Price Control Committee is distributing things to a few merchants. Coming straight from Trikkur where he might be having his residence, going all over this State in his tapioca cultivation drive, he might not have known what exactly is taking place in the Municipalities. Fortunately, I know what is taking place both in the Municipalities of Ernakulam and Trichur. I know, as a matter of fact that sugar is being distributed to every household. It is an irresponsible statement of the Hon'ble member that sugar is being distributed only to a few people by a few merchants.

Then there is a lot of recrimination cast on the department on account of the fact that many things which the Commissioner of Civil Supplies or the Price Control Department is trying to achieve are not being achieved. My submisson to this House is it is not really the fault of the department. I won't regard that as a fault of the department because in all cases of price control the only thing that the department can do is to lay down a policy. Other departments must come to the co-operation of this department and see that the rules laid down by the Price Control Department are really enforced. I am at one with the Hon'ble Member in saying that even if the Price Control Department does not exist, we still can get on in some fashion. But it is not because the activities of the Price Control Department that are now being carried on, are being done in a wrong way. My submission is that there is a real necessity for a Price Control Staff only if it is possible for us to have adequate supplies in the State. It is in that way that I agree with the Hon'ble Member, saying that this department need not exist. Because as it is, for our rice supply we are practically dependant upon British India and if we are not going to get adequate supplies from British India, there is no use of any control here, unless we introduce rationing straight on. It is not possible to give to people more than a limited quantity. Without that, there is no use of control.

As regards the kerosene oil, I appreciate the statement of the Hon'ble Member that the villages are not getting enough of kerosene. It is a fact in the municipalities too. Practically almost all the kerosene seems to be consumed by certain few individuals, not particularly through the Supply Department but extraneous supply of the Control Department. If that is so, I can't understand the argument why the Price Control Department should be attacked for that.

So, my final submission to this House is that it is not really proper for us to attack a department in this fashion as it is a new department—I do not say that the member who is in charge of the department is doing all that should be done in time, and I am prepared to concede that there are enough shortcomings. But I think a little more of time given to him will make much more easy for him as well as for the consumers of the country.

Mr. A. V. Moothedan *(Chalakkudi)*: I wish to say a few words on this motion. There is a public feeling that the department is not working efficiently, and Mr. Ramachandra Ayyar gave vent to that feeling by a resolution. There is nothing wrong in bringing such a resolution.

* Speech not corrected by the hon'ble member.

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Mr. V. K. Bhaskara Menon *(Cranganur):* I did not rule it out of order.

Mr. A. V. Moothedan *(Chalakkudi):* You have no power to do it. If you had power, you would have done it. I should say a part of the blame also goes to the Hon'ble Member for Cranganur because he is a member of the Price Control Committee, which has to give proper advice to the Commissioner of Civil Supplies from time to time.

Regarding the price control and rice control, we have had enough discussion in this House What is the object of this price control and rice control? We must have the necessary commodities for human life on a reasonable price and reasonable quantities. There are two things underlying: not only that price should be reasonable, but we must have quantities to satisfy our needs. It is not enough if there is a rule or statute that rice shall be sold at 5 annas per Edangazhi, but there should be rice available in sufficient quantities. Therefore, the duties of the department are to see that proper quantities of essential commodities are available for tho citizens and then to see that they are sold at reasonable price. These are the two functions of the department.

Regarding the question whether things are sold at a reasonable price or not, I should any there is a great responsibility on the part of the public. The Civil Supplies Commissioner fixes the price of paddy, rice, kerosene at such-and-such price. He can only prescribe. Then the public should co-operate with him to see that things are sold at that rate. But I find even very learned people, advocates and other people purchasing and then complaining "Today I purchased one bag of rice at Rs. 25 and what is the use of the Control Department." I said "You please give a written statement saying from which shop and at what price you purchased." Then he said "I won't give that". For price control, the co-operation of the public is highly necessary. The public should make it a point that they should purchase things only at the fixed rate. In Mattancheri and Ernakulam the public are noted for lethargy. The people of Mattancheri never take any interest in public matters, because they are all people coming from outside, and there is no co-operation of the public of Mattancheri In Trichur the public are vigilant and I think there is not so much scope for corruption. So, in the matter of price control, the whole blame cannot be thrown on the departmental head.

The second point. Are we getting sufficient quantities of these essential commodities, for instance, rice. Food is highly necessary and rice is our food. Are we getting sufficient rice? Even today, I am tired of people making representations to me. I simply direct them to Mr. Prabhu who is their saviour and still people come to me. Even yesterday some 30 or 40 people came to me saying that they are not getting rice in Kumbalangy in spite of the fact that there is a Fair Price Shop there. Only 15 bags of rice are being sold there every day. The population of Kumbalangy is about 13,000 people. How can this be sufficient. Some rich people who came to me the other day said "We have no rice. But if the public are so unsatisfied, later on they will attack us and take away all our food and even kill us." They have got that apprehension. Therefore, they are anxious that the poor people get sufficient rice and food. Why are we not getting sufficient rice? That is a thing within the knowledge of the Civil Supplies Commissioner alone. We have no idea of it at all. Now, regarding the quantities available, the Civil Supplies Commissioner is the authority. What we know is only that people are not getting rice.

So, it is the duty of the Commissioner to show to the House that it is not due to any fault of the department that the people are not getting rice.

There is another complaint that these poor people in the Cochin-Kanayannur Taluk are not getting tapioca.

Deputy President: Mr. Moothedan, the Diwan wants this to be discussed tomorrow morning. So the consideration of this resolution may be adjourned to tomorrow. I hope the House will agree to that.

The consideration of the resolution was postponed to tomorrow

Mr. C. J. Mathew *(Joint Secretary to Government):* Of the next 4 resolutions 3 relate to the Department of the Director of Public Instruction. He is unavoidably absent. I request that those 3 resolutions may kindly be adjourned to tomorrow.

Deputy President: Yes.

Mr. T. S. Ramachandra Ayyar *(Chittur-Tattamangalam):* I do not move the resolution standing in my name.

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